

Internet GOV Domain Naming
Comment 1

To: State Government Council and Technical Panel
From: Lotus Administrators Workgroup
Subject: Internet GOV Domain Naming Convention
Date: September 8, 2003

The Lotus Administrators Workgroup has concerns regarding the passing of the Internet GOV Domain Naming Convention standard that will require the use of **nebraska-dot-gov** (**nebraska.gov**) and **ne-dot-gov** (**ne.gov**). It seems that there is already a widely used standard at the State of Nebraska, which is the domain of **state-dot-ne-dot-us** (**state.ne.us**). Adding or changing to another domain will bring complications and confusion to the Internet community.

The standard of 'state.ne.us' is a simple standard based on political geography ([RFC 1480](#)) and has been widely accepted by a good majority of the state. Anyone accessing a web site of 'state.ne.us' will know that they are receiving information from Nebraska State Government. To include city and county examples, the city of Lincoln is using 'ci.lincoln.ne.us' and the county of Lincoln is using 'co.lincoln.ne.us'. The 'ci' and 'co' identify city and county government in much the same way that 'state' identifies state government. By using this naming convention, there is a very high probability that I can directly access any city, county, or state government just by entering their most logical web address. This standard allows for uniqueness and very low conflict in domain name assignments.

It is our understanding that by adding 'ne.gov' as a standard, new web sites or web sites that are using 'state.ne.us' can use 'ne.gov'. Since cities and counties will be authorized to register under 'ne.gov' on a first-come-first-serve basis (i.e. 'lincoln.ne.gov' or 'max.ne.gov'), the Internet user will not know if they are getting information from either city, county, or state government. There would also be the possibility that 'max.ne.gov' is a server at the state therefore eliminating the city of Max the opportunity in its use.

Implementing 'ne.gov' seems very simple, but the manageability and costs can be quite high. As we see agencies adopting this new standard, other agencies already using 'state.ne.us' will want to change to 'ne.gov'. Requests for changing email addresses will also be made. While the cost of changing to 'ne.gov' would be minimal for the smaller agencies (say less than 100 employees), the costs of changing the larger agencies (say Health and Human Services) can be quite large and we believe this has not been taken into consideration. Currently, over 65 percent of the state employees are using 'state.ne.us' in their email address. Eventually, the Governor will demand that a single standard be used and the monies will need to be spent to change either one way or the other.

Although the Lotus Notes Administrators workgroup is always open to new ideas and changes to making electronic operations and communications at the State of Nebraska easier and more efficient. In this specific instance, it was agreed that the costs and risks of adding this change to an already established and generally accepted domain naming convention outweighed any substantial immediate short-term benefits that could be gained.

If you have any questions or comments on this document, please contact:

Glen Riedel, Lotus Administrator
NE Dept of Insurance
402.471.4432
griedel@doi.state.ne.us